

Global Landfill, Old Bridge Township, Ernston Road, Old Bridge Township, Middlesex County

This site is a 60-acre municipal landfill that began operating in 1968. Municipal, commercial and industrial wastes and septic sludge were deposited in the landfill under a license with the state. NJDEP ordered the owner/operator of the landfill to stop landfilling activities in 1984 after heavy rains caused one of the slopes to collapse and slide into the adjacent wetlands. Subsequent environmental sampling revealed leachate contaminated with volatile organic compounds was seeping from the landfill into the wetlands. NJDEP also discovered 63 buried drums containing hazardous wastes during an exploratory excavation in 1988. Due to the presence of contaminated leachate and buried drums, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) added Global Landfill to the National Priorities List of Superfund sites in 1989.

In 1991, after conducting a closure study of the landfill, NJDEP and USEPA signed a Record of Decision (ROD) that required stabilization of the landfill slopes and installation of a hazardous waste cap with landfill gas and leachate controls. However, implementation of these measures was postponed pending completion of a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) for the site.

Between 1991 and 1996 NJDEP conducted a RI/FS to determine the nature and extent of the contamination at the landfill and surrounding wetlands and evaluate remedial alternatives. The RI/FS revealed the shallow ground water was contaminated with volatile and semi-volatile organic compounds, pesticides and metals, but these contaminants were not creating a significant ecological impact on the wetlands. The RI/FS also showed that the deeper aquifer was contaminated with volatile and semi-volatile organic compounds and metals at only one monitor well location at the site. An ecological study of the wetlands revealed sediments near a landfill seep were contaminated with ammonia. Based on these findings, USEPA issued a ROD in 1997 that required long-term monitoring of the shallow and deep aquifers, excavation of approximately 5,000 cubic yards of contaminated wetland sediments with placement of the sediments under the landfill cap, and ecological monitoring of the wetlands. NJDEP is working with a group of 29 potentially responsible parties, including waste haulers, chemical and pharmaceutical firms and other industries whose wastes were disposed at the site, to design the landfill cap and landfill gas/leachate controls. The owner/operator of the landfill, the Global Reclamation Company, agreed to a cash-out settlement with NJDEP in 1992.